

## Senate Bill No. 407

### CHAPTER 139

An act to amend Section 118215 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to medical waste.

[Approved by Governor July 21, 1999. Filed with  
Secretary of State July 22, 1999.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 407, Alpert. Medical waste: disposal.

Existing law requires a person generating or treating medical waste to ensure that the medical waste is treated by one of certain methods, thereby rendering it solid waste, as defined, prior to disposal. Existing law permits discharge of medical waste to a public sewage system if the medical waste is liquid or semiliquid and meets other specified conditions.

This bill would revise the conditions required for disposal of medical waste to a public sewage system, including an authorization to treat a medical waste that is a specified type of biohazardous waste by chemical disinfection if certain requirements are met.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 118215 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

118215. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b) and (c), a person generating or treating medical waste shall ensure that the medical waste is treated by one of the following methods, thereby rendering it solid waste, as defined in Section 40191 of the Public Resources Code, prior to disposal:

(1) (A) Incineration at a permitted medical waste treatment facility in a controlled-air, multichamber incinerator, or other method of incineration approved by the department which provides complete combustion of the waste into carbonized or mineralized ash.

(B) Treatment with an alternative technology approved pursuant to paragraph (3), which, due to the extremely high temperatures of treatment in excess of 1300 degrees Fahrenheit, has received express approval from the department.

(2) Steam sterilization at a permitted medical waste treatment facility or by other sterilization, in accordance with all of the following operating procedures for steam sterilizers or other sterilization:

(A) Standard written operating procedures shall be established for biological indicators, or for other indicators of adequate sterilization approved by the department, for each steam sterilizer, including time, temperature, pressure, type of waste, type of container, closure on container, pattern of loading, water content, and maximum load quantity.

(B) Recording or indicating thermometers shall be checked during each complete cycle to ensure the attainment of 121° Centigrade (250° Fahrenheit) for at least one-half hour, depending on the quantity and density of the load, to achieve sterilization of the entire load. Thermometers shall be checked for calibration annually. Records of the calibration checks shall be maintained as part of the facility's files and records for a period of three years or for the period specified in the regulations.

(C) Heat-sensitive tape, or another method acceptable to the enforcement agency, shall be used on each biohazard bag or sharps container that is processed onsite to indicate the attainment of adequate sterilization conditions.

(D) The biological indicator *Bacillus stearothermophilus*, or other indicator of adequate sterilization as approved by the department, shall be placed at the center of a load processed under standard operating conditions at least monthly to confirm the attainment of adequate sterilization conditions.

(E) Records of the procedures specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D) shall be maintained for a period of not less than three years.

(3) (A) Other alternative medical waste treatment methods which are both of the following:

(i) Approved by the department.

(ii) Result in the destruction of pathogenic micro-organisms.

(B) Any alternative medical waste treatment method proposed to the department shall be evaluated by the department and either approved or rejected pursuant to the criteria specified in this subdivision.

(b) A medical waste may be discharged to a public sewage system without treatment if it is not a biohazardous waste of a type described in either subdivision (a) or (b) of Section 117635, it is liquid or semiliquid, and its discharge is consistent with waste discharge requirements placed on the public sewage system by the California regional water quality control board with jurisdiction.

(c) (1) A medical waste that is a biohazardous waste of a type described in subdivision (a) of Section 117635 may be treated by a chemical disinfection if the medical waste is liquid or semiliquid and the chemical disinfection method is recognized by the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the American Biological Safety Association, and if the use of



chemical disinfection as a treatment method is identified in the site's medical waste management plan.

(2) If the waste is not treated by chemical disinfection, in accordance with paragraph (1), the waste shall be treated by one of the methods specified in subdivision (a).

(3) Following treatment by chemical disinfection, the medical waste may be discharged to the public sewage system if the discharge is consistent with waste discharge requirements placed on the public sewage system by the California regional water control board, and the discharge is in compliance with the requirements imposed by the owner or operator of the public sewage system. If the chemical disinfection of the medical waste causes the waste to become a hazardous waste, the waste shall be managed in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 25100) of Division 20.

